

Istook Supports Border Security Measure

Washington, DC -- Congressman Ernest Istook (R-OK) has thrown his support behind a border security measure which would establish national standards for state driver's licenses, curb abuse of U.S. asylum laws by terrorists, and allow the Department of Defense to complete construction of the San Diego border fence.

“These are some common sense reforms to help us combat terrorists both inside and outside our borders,” said Istook, an original cosponsor of the bill. **“Right now, terrorists and other criminals are exploiting these weaknesses in our system to escape detection and move freely about our country.”**

H.R. 418, The Border Security Act of 2005, sets minimum information and security requirements for the issuance of state driver's licenses. If state driver's licenses do not meet the minimum standards, they will not be accepted by the federal government as an adequate form of identification for air travel and other purposes. Under the standards, applicants must prove “lawful presence” in the United States in order to get a permanent driver's license; those without proof of lawful presence may still get a temporary license to drive but it may not be used for federal identification.

The bill also strengthens asylum laws which terrorists have used numerous times in recent years to gain access to the United States. It specifically overturns recent 9th Circuit court decisions which granted asylum to applicants on the basis that their government believes they are terrorists.

“It's outrageous that liberal courts and activist judges have so skewed our immigration laws,” said Istook. **“This bill restores much needed balance in our treatment of treatment of suspected terrorists.”**

The bill also gives the Department of Defense the authority to complete the construction of a 14-mile border fence between Mexico and San Diego, the single most heavily-trafficked area by criminal illegal aliens. The construction of the fence has been delayed for over 8 years due to environmental lawsuits.

The U.S. House is expected to vote on the measure this week.